



REPRESENTATION OF ARCHITECTURE IN INDIAN PAINTINGS WITH REFERENCE TO RAJASTHANI MINIATURE PAINTINGS

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ABSTRACT

Architecture is mother of all arts. Every other art form like painting, sculpture, dance, music, drama etc developed under the shelter of architecture. But sometimes it is vice versa as Indian paintings also provided space to architecture which added a new dimension to world art. The typical style of representing architecture is one of the notable features of Indian paintings. The distinctive style of representation shows multiple views of architectural elements placed in the painting to narrate stories. Surprisingly this typical characteristic has been observed since the tradition of paintings began. Evidences are found in the early paintings like Ajanta caves followed by Jain palm leaf manuscript, Mughal manuscripts and finally in Rajasthani miniature paintings. The method of representation of architecture is considered as a special feature of Indian paintings that correlate the ideology of 20th century Cubism.

The history of India is ever changing which ruled by different monarchy. The examples of their establishments discovered through ancient art works. These evidences tell us the development of various art forms, philosophy and life style of rulers and the common men. This study would be a fundamental understanding of artistic expression and application in the art of painting.

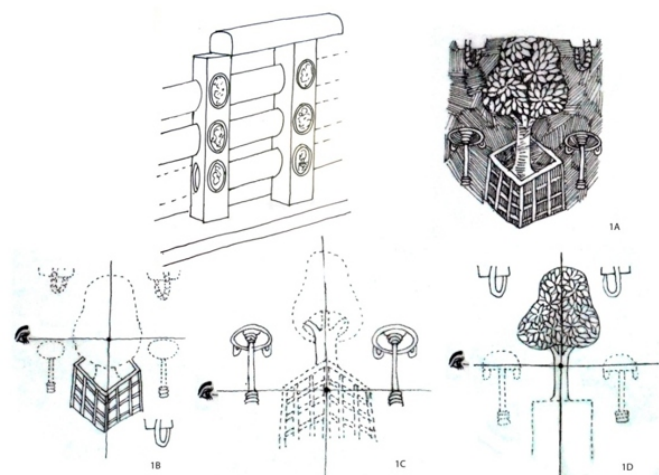
This study is also being made to understand the method of representation according to story, variety of architectural composition in paintings, the traditional thought process of a painter, transformation of architectural elements in different regions. This research is an attempt to bring a logical clarification to understand the paradigms of architecture in Rajasthani miniature paintings.

KEYWORDS: Architecture, Miniature Paintings, Palm leaf manuscript, Mughal miniature, Rajasthani miniature, Cubism

INTRODUCTION:

There is one of the low relief railing sculptures from Bodhgaya (Bihar, India) shows a Bodhi (awakening) tree on a Vedika (pedestal) with two umbrellas on both the sides. The relief shows the Bodhi tree enclosed by a railing and flanked on either side by an umbrella and garlands. The artist has used three eye levels in the same composition: the pedestal is seen from below the eye level, two umbrellas are shown above the eye level, the bodhi tree and the garlands are on the eye level of the viewer. The artist has mixed up three different views and presented in one individual frame. Apparently, the work of art perhaps leaves the viewers in confusion but on the other hand it shows progressive and modern thinking of the artist. It is beyond reality and comparable to ideology of 20th century cubism. The integration of multiple eye level in a single panel is quite unique at that period.

Figure 1 A shows the relief of the bodhi tree on either side by an umbrella and a garland. Here the artist has used three eye-levels in the same composition.



1. Bodhi Tree from Bodhgaya railing, Figure- 1A

Figure 1B shows the railing is seen below the eye-level.

Figure 1C shows the two umbrellas are above the eye-level.

Figure 1D show the bodhi tree and the two garlands are on the eye-level of the spectator.

Established by literary evidences, the art of painting in India flourished from a very early time, and the philosophy of Indian art is also deeply rooted. Visualization of every form evolved out of a meaningful interpretation and having significance that connected to religious contemplation. The ancient literature Vishnu Dharmottara Puran presented evidences of iconography and various methods of artistic expressions. Thus the Art of India is enigmatic and full of secrets in most of its representations. It is the source of inspiration for many writers and researchers of art and aesthetics. It is believed that the Art of India begins with one source and manifested through many forms and mediums which include painting, sculpture, architecture, dance, drama, literature, music and many more. In a way the art of India emerged with multidimensional characteristic. This research is an attempt to reveal one of the unexplored areas of Indian painting. Architecture is one such element which has been frequently appeared in the painting since early stage but less explored.

MATERIALS & METHODS:

- 1. Paintings as resource (Secondary Resource):** The research is descriptive in character; therefore data of the research are mainly miniature paintings from different parts of Rajasthan. Images of paintings have been collected and documented from museums (National Museum, New Delhi, Indian Museum Calcutta), Royal Palaces (Umaid Bhabhan palace Jodhpur, City palace Jaipur, City palace Udaipur and Chittorgarh palace etc.) and private collections. The main constraint of the research is unavailability of original images. Some of the paintings are in the collections of foreign art galleries and museums. Therefore, the images printed in the books on miniature painting are important resource of the study.
- 2. Literature as resource:** The Secondary source of the research is libraries, literatures and published journals etc. The National Museum in New Delhi and Indian Museum, Calcutta preserves rich collection of literature are visited to collect data. Apart from books, manuscripts are also studied to extract important information.
- 3. Personal interviews with traditional miniature artists (Primary Resource):** All the data required for the research might not be available from secondary resource thus the Research has been conducted to fulfill the void through personal interviews with traditional miniature artists. The personal interviews have been conducted during the visits of various places of Rajasthan.

RESULTS:

The result for this research is as follows:

- The method of representation of architecture in Rajasthani miniature painting has a sense of modern art.
- The representation of architecture in Rajasthani miniature paintings has dis-

tinct method of representation, the principles of which can be a source for contemporary art and design world.

DISCUSSION:

The research is based on two major objectives:

- To explore the understanding of architectural representation in Rajasthani traditional miniature painting.
- To determine advanced and progressive thinking of traditional art.

The research will further demonstrate how traditional artists represented architecture in miniature paintings. It is a journey through the paintings in four regions of Rajasthan-relating to similarity with real architecture and their transformations, principle of space division, compositional methods and identifying unique character of each regional style. It will also clarify the traditional method of structural design in various categories of paintings. Further objectives of the research are:

- To explore the traditional method of representing architecture and its application in paintings.
- To find resemblance among paintings and real architecture of local area and its transformation in painting.
- To find an impact of Mughal paintings in Rajasthani miniatures.
- To segregate various types of architectural elements visualized in miniature paintings.
- To determine significance of architectural space occupied in paintings.
- To establish the basis of traditional Indian art as highly developed and progressive.

CONCLUSION:

The representation architecture in paintings includes every lifestyle of Indian society. It depicts the life of Kings and queens under royal palace as well as living of common men. It was utilized as a platform for different subjects and themes. The journey of development of architecture in paintings is observed since Ajanta till the miniatures of Rajasthan. It began in the caves as large murals and eventually transformed to manuscript and finally to miniature paintings. The surface got changed from hard rock wall to little palm leaf, cloth or paper. The journey was never been stopped or abandoned rather transformed to different shape or form to keep the tradition alive. The journey show many changes according to time.

The painters of Rajasthan never considered any formal distortion of objects. The architecture represented intact and skillfully placed in the space which helps to narrate the story. Different situations, multiple views and reduced time duration compacted in a single frame. The beauty of architecture enhanced with utmost skill. Every detail is shown which is identical to real object but stylized such a way seeing a miniature painting becomes always a pleasure. Thus the concept of architecture is quite contemporary by character. The essence of representation of architecture has been untold but wordlessly expressed even before the Cubism was born.

The art of India never developed the way Western art did nor it followed any Isms but there was always acceptance of others to become wealthier. There are definite possibilities in terms of thought and representation to produce contemporary art works out of architecture from miniatures of Rajasthan.

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